



RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

One Corliss Park

Providence, RI 02908

MEETING MINUTES – Special Meeting

Date: September 24, 2013

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Minutes recorded by: Nancy Sousa (from Cart notes)

Minutes approved on: 10/15/13

Interpreters:

Cart: Shelley Deming

RIDE:

Attorney:

Call to Order

- a. Chairperson Marie Lynch called the meeting of the RI School for the Deaf Board of Trustees to order at 6:06 p.m. in the Cafeteria of the RI School for the Deaf.

Roll Call of Board of Trustees

- b. **In Attendance:** Travis Zellner, Amy Donnelly Roche, Jodi Merryman, Joseph Fischgrund, Amanda Montgomery, Heather Niedbala
 - c. **Excused:** Westley Resendes, Lindsey Medeiros
- **Acceptance of Previous Meeting Minutes** (6:05 – 6:10pm)
 - August 6, 2013 (Executive Session) – Approved by consensus
 - September 10, 2013 (General Session) – Approved by consensus with corrections
 - **Reports:** (6:10 – 6:20pm)
 - **Chairperson**
 - **Discussion items:** Members discussed who/was not leaving the Board (Travis, Amy, and Westley) and it was noted that the BOT needs to continue to think about future nominees. Members would look into the possibility of reimbursing out-of-state members for their travel to meetings; look at alumni association for possible nominees.
 - **Director** – see attached hand-out – we are here tonight primarily to address the budget.

- **Finance Director – Maureen Wu:**

Went over the budget (3 in all) with members, page by page; we are proposing a 4% reduction – the state target reduction was 7%; most expenses are in salaries and benefits. We are trying to minimize the impact on students and the school, and with a 4% reduction we are trying to make the best of a bad situation. We cannot propose a budget that has no reduction. We will submit this proposed budget to RIDE who will send to the Governor and Budget Office, then to the Legislature for final approval.

Members discussed appointing a budget sub-committee – J. Fischgrund agreed to help with that. Members had many questions about the impact on students, our reform and strategic plans – derived from these cuts to staff, especially instructional staff.

Mary Pendergast: reminded that this is a proposed budget; it is not known what cuts will have to be made – student enrollment affects this: we could get 5 preschoolers, 4 high school students; 3 students in a different level changes what the cuts will be dramatically. (After a break) explained different federal sources of money – Title 1, IDEA part B and Title 2 are the primary sources. (gave a copy of her report to all) These federal dollars are used for special services required by an IEP; have to be used specifically for how they are prescribed – lots of regulations around their use. Race to the Top funds are being used for Professional Development and for salaries of some of the teachers and lead teachers; changing to the Common Core.

- **Discussion Items:**

- 2014-2015 Budget – see above

Chair: summarized the discussion as we have heard from Director, Finance Director and Special Education Coordinator to obtain some rationale for approving the proposed budget; cannot discuss individual people (for staff cuts); we are entertaining a 4% cut as a proposed budget although none of us like it; there is a need to trust our administrators in proposing this budget to us—that they have attempted to minimize the impact to the school and this is the best they could do with the cuts being asked for by the state; we have to decide together whether or not we can reach some consensus around it – which means can we live with it?

One Board Member indicated that she could not support this because I don't understand what the budget is – so I suggest that the Board consider taking a vote.

- **Action Items**

- Approval of the 2014-2015 Budget

A motion was made by **Travis Zellner** and seconded by **Joseph Fischgrund** to accept the budget recommended to the Board on 9/24/13 by the administrative staff of the RI School for the Deaf.

All in favor: Travis Zellner, Marie Lynch, Heather Niedbala, Jodi Merryman, Joseph Fischgrund, Amanda Montgomery.

Not in favor: Amy Donnelly-Roche

THE MOTION IS CARRIED FOR THE PROPOSED BUDGET. IT IS APPROVED.

Adjournment: 8:00 p.m.